

COULD GO REALLY USE ME?

17 MAY, 2026

SUMMARY

This message explores the transformative power of Pentecost and challenges the common misconception that God only works through spiritually elite or naturally gifted people. The message emphasizes that Christianity began with ordinary, frightened disciples who became extraordinary through the power of the Holy Spirit. The core theological insight is that God intentionally chooses to work through ordinary, surrendered people rather than those who appear impressive by worldly standards. The message calls believers to recognize that their ordinariness is not a disqualification but rather the perfect starting point for God's work. It challenges listeners to move beyond mere church attendance to active spiritual engagement, emphasizing that Christianity is not about human effort covered with spiritual language, but about genuine surrender to the Holy Spirit's power. The message culminates in preparing the community for deeper mission and expansion, reminding them that the future of the church depends not on human strength but on ordinary people becoming open to the Holy Spirit.

KEY POINTS

- The disciples before Pentecost were ordinary, frightened people who fled and hid, yet God chose them to change the world
- Many Christians wrongly believe God only uses people with great faith, holiness, or spiritual confidence
- The church becomes alive not through better strategies or structures, but when ordinary believers become deeply open to the Holy Spirit
- Christianity is not about becoming impressive enough for God to use, but about becoming surrendered enough for God to work through
- People often disqualify themselves from God's mission by focusing on their limitations rather than God's power
- The ministry exists for one reason: to proclaim the glory of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth
- Mary MacKillop exemplifies how God works through ordinary people with extraordinary trust
- Pentecost is not primarily about human capability but about what becomes possible when ordinary people surrender to the Holy Spirit
- Lay people are called to be God's presence in the world—in workplaces, families, and communities
- God often allows us to remain conscious of our insufficiency so we don't trust in ourselves but in Him

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

- Acts 1:4-5, 8: "While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father... For John baptized with water, but you'll be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days

from now... But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you'll be my witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth."

STORIES:

- Mary MacKillop (St. Mary of the Cross) as an example of an ordinary woman with little money or resources who trusted God completely and founded schools and served the poor
- Stephen from Acts who began by overseeing food distribution before becoming significant in the early church
- Philip who was one of the seven servants before becoming a great preacher
- Peter who trembled and denied Jesus around a fire, yet became the leader of the church
- The story of a Josephite nun who told Bruce Downes that their ministry represents the future of the church and is like a new religious order
- Two people from the United States who told Bruce Downes they appreciate his ordinariness and how he shares his failures

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SMALL GROUP GUIDE

This guide is designed to help your small group dive deeper into the message.

OPENING PRAYER

Invite the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion and open hearts to God's transforming work during this Easter season. Pray the IMPACTERS Community Prayer .

ICEBREAKER

Share a time when you felt completely inadequate for something God (or life) was asking you to do. What happened?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Section 1: Personal Reflection

1. **The Disqualification Trap:** The message suggests many people "disqualify themselves from deeper mission" by focusing on what they lack. In what areas of your life have you disqualified yourself from what God might be calling you to?
2. **Ordinary Beginnings:** Think about the disciples hiding behind locked doors before Pentecost. How does knowing their fear and ordinariness before the Holy Spirit came change how you view your own potential?
3. **Your "Why":** The message asks, "Why are you here?" How would you honestly answer that question about your faith community? Are you here to watch ministry happen or because you have a ministry?

Section 2: The Holy Spirit's Role

4. **Waiting for Power:** The disciples were told to *wait* for the Holy Spirit rather than rush into action. What's the difference between "human effort covered with spiritual language" and truly Spirit-led ministry? Can you give examples?
5. **Pentecost Today:** Do you believe the Holy Spirit desires to work through ordinary believers *now* with the same power as in Acts? What makes this hard to believe? What makes it exciting?
6. **Your Preparation:** The message suggests that your current circumstances—your job, skills, experiences, even your failures—might be God preparing you for something. What in your current season might God be using to prepare you?

Section 3: Practical Application

7. **The Surrender Question:** Where is God asking you to say yes in a way that is "so spiritual, so beyond logic" that it would require His resources and power?

8. **Your Sphere of Influence:** The message mentions being God's presence "at work, in your family, in the hospital, in business." Where has God specifically placed you to be His witness? How might the Holy Spirit want to work through you there?
9. **From Scarcity to Abundance:** Mary MacKillop had "little money, little resources, constantly uncertain," yet founded schools and served the poor. What would change in your life if you truly trusted that "if God truly desires something, He would do it"?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

Option 1: The Surrender Inventory

- Write down 3 areas where you feel inadequate or ordinary
- Next to each, write: "What if God wants to use me *here*?"
- Pray daily: "Holy Spirit, I'm available. Use me."

Option 2: The Pentecost Prayer

- Commit to praying daily for the Holy Spirit to fill you with power
- Ask specifically: "Where do you want to work through me today?"
- Journal any promptings, opportunities, or moments of courage

Option 3: The Availability Conversation

- Have an honest conversation with God about your willingness
- Complete this sentence in prayer: "God, I've been disqualifying myself from _____, but I'm willing to be available if you want to use me."

Option 4: The Recognition Exercise

- Look back at your life journey
- Identify 3 experiences, skills, or even failures that might have been God preparing you
- Ask: "What might you be preparing me for?"

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray together: *"Come Holy Spirit. We are ordinary. We are insufficient. We are weak. But we are available. Fall upon us. Work through us. Let Christ become visible in our lives, our families, our workplaces, and our world. We surrender ourselves completely to you. Amen."*